

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 091221Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3051

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

USIA WASHDC

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDING EO, TAGS, SUBJECT)

BELGRADE ALSO FOR USDEL CSCE

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: CSCE, SHUM, PFOR, CVIS, BU

SUBJECT: REPORTING DATA ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES:

BULGARIAN PERFORMANCE

REF: A) SOFIA 1149; B) 76 STATE 205933; C) SOFIA 0947;
D) SOFIA 0857; E) SOFIA 0720; F) SOFIA 0719; G) SOFIA 0310;
H) SOFIA A-14, APRIL 25, 1977

1. SUMMARY: WE ARE SERIOUSLY CONCERNED THAT US FIGURES USED
IN FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES DO NOT REFLECT AMOUNT OF FAMILY
VISITATION WHICH ACTUALLY IS TAKING PLACE SO THAT THE CASE US
MAKES AT BELGRADE MAY BE OPEN TO STATISTICAL ATTACK, EVEN
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THOUGH THE BULGARIANS USE CRITERIA WHICH ARE QUITE DEFICIENT.
WE PROPOSE A SIMPLIFIED YET, WE BELIEVE, MORE ACCURATE WAY
OF SUMMARIZING FAMILY REUNIFICATION SITUATION. OUR DEFINITION IS IN
STRICT ACCORDANCE WITH THE WORDING OF THE RELEVANT PROVISIONS OF
THE FINAL ACT OF HELSINKI. WE ALSO CHART BULGARIAN PERFORMANCE
ON FAMILY REUNIFICATIONS AS OF MAY 31, 1977 IN TERMS OF THE
NEW CATEGORIES SUGGESTED. END SUMMARY.

2. DEPT WILL RECALL (PER REF A) THAT MFA OFFICIAL RECENTLY EXPRESSED CONCERN AND ANNOYANCE THAT FIGURES USED BY US PRESS AND CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS IN DISCUSSING BULGARIAN PERFORMANCE ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES ARE CONSIDERABLY LOWER THAN THOSE WHICH GOB ITSELF USES. GOB, AT BEGINNING OF JUNE, CONSIDERED IT HAD "SOLVED" APPROXIMATELY 100 OF APPROXIMATELY 110 US FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES, AND DOUBTLESS GOB WILL USE FIGURES OF THIS ORDER OF MAGNITUDE IF AND WHEN PROBLEM IS DISCUSSED AT BELGRADE.

3. TO VERY LARGE DEGREE, DISCREPANCIES RESULT FROM DEFINITIONAL PROBLEMS. GOB CONSIDERS A CASE "SOLVED" WHEN PASSPORT OFFICE HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED THAT IT MAY, UPON RECEIVING AN APPLICATION IN PROPER FORM, ISSUE THE REQUESTED PASSPORT. THIS IS WITHOUT REFERENCE TO WHETHER THE APPLICANT HAS IN THE MEANTIME DIED, BECOME TOO ILL TO TRAVEL, OR FOR OTHER REASONS DOES NOT WISH TO TRAVEL; IT ALSO IS WITHOUT REFERENCE TO WHETHER US SPONSOR HAS IN THE MEANTIME DIED, DIVORCED, MOVED AWAY AND BECOME UNLOCATABLE, OR FOR OTHER REASONS HAS REVOKED SPONSORSHIP. GOB ALSO SEEMS TO COUNT A CASE AS SOLVED WHEN SOME FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED PASSPORTS EVEN THOUGH OTHER MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY UNIT ARE FORCED TO REMAIN IN BULGARIA AS "HOSTAGES" FOR THE RETURN OF THOSE ALLOWED TO TRAVEL.

4. DEPT, IN REF B, SET QUITE A DIFFERENT DEFINITION FOR "FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES" TO BE REPORTED STATISTICALLY EACH MONTH. A "FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASE" WAS DEFINED AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ONE BEING PROCESSED FOR EMIGRATION ONLY, AND NOT FOR A TEMPORARY VISIT, AND A "DIVIDED FAMILY CASE" WAS ONE IN WHICH MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY "HAVE BEEN REFUSED EXIT PERMISSION AND WHO HAVE, SINCE REFUSAL, EXPRESSED RENEWED INTEREST OR HAD IT EXPRESSED ON THEIR BEHALF, TO EMIGRATE; AND WHERE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST HAS OCCURRED WITHIN RECENT PAST AND CASE MAY THUS BE ASSUMED TO BE STILL 'ACTIVE'." MATTERS ARE FURTHER COMPLICATED BY FACT THAT DEPT HAS USED TERMS "FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASE" AND "DIVIDED FAMILY CASE" INTERCHANGEABLY.

5. IT SEEMS TO US THAT NEITHER THE DEFINITION USED BY GOB NOR THAT USED BY DEPT TELLS COMPLETE STORY IN A MANNER WHICH WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD BY THE AVERAGE INTERESTED LAY PERSON OR MEMBER OF CONGRESS. (IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE THAT THE VOA ACCOUNT OF CONGRESSMAN LAGOMARSINO'S LETTER -- REF A -- HAS HIM ASSERTING THAT THERE ARE 33 UNRESOLVED FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW THIS FIGURE WAS ARRIVED AT.) PRESUMABLY, SUCH A PERSON WOULD WANT TO KNOW WHAT THE TOTAL PERFORMANCE OF A COUNTRY HAS BEEN WITH REGARD

TO FAMILY REUNIFICATIONS, INCLUDING VISITS TO US FAMILY

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MEMBERS AS WELL AS EMIGRATION. NOT EVERYONE WHO WANTS TO BE "REUNIFIED" WITH A FAMILY MEMBER WANTS TO OR CAN EMIGRATE; MANY HAVE TIES IN THE COUNTRY OF ORIGINAL RESIDENCE WHICH THEY DO NOT WISH TO OR CANNOT BREAK. INDEED, THE FINAL ACT DOES NOT DEFINE FAMILY REUNIFICATION AS NECESSARILY INVOLVING EMIGRATION. IN FACT, THE STATEMENT "THE RECEIVING PARTICIPATING STATE WILL TAKE APPROPRIATE CARE WITH REGARD TO EMPLOYMENT FOR PERSONS FROM OTHER PARTICIPATING STATES WHO TAKE UP PERMANENT RESIDENCE IN THAT STATE IN CONNEXION WITH FAMILY REUNIFICATION" CAN CERTAINLY BE READ AS IMPLYING THAT NOT ALL THOSE WHO VISIT "IN CONNEXION WITH FAMILY REUNIFICATION" WILL NECESSARILY TAKE UP PERMANENT RESIDENCE.

6. ACCORDINGLY, THIS EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT IN DISCUSSING PERFORMANCE ON FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES, ESPECIALLY IN INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS AND IN BRIEFINGS FOR CONGRESSMEN, DEPT SHOULD PROVIDE FOLLOWING DATA: (A) TOTAL NUMBER

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OF ACTIVE EMIGRATION CASES (INVOLVING CLOSE FAMILY MEMBERS IN RECEIVING COUNTRY) KNOWN TO THE APPROPRIATE EMBASSY AND TOTAL OF INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED; (B) TOTAL NUMBER OF EMIGRATION CASES (SUB-SET OF A) IN WHICH PASSPORTS AND EXIT PERMITS HAVE BEEN ISSUED AND PRESENTED TO THAT EMBASSY FOR VISA-ING, AND TOTAL INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED; (C) TOTAL NUMBER OF PASSPORTS PRESENTED TO THAT EMBASSY FOR ISSUANCE OF B-2 VISAS FOR PURPOSES OF VISITING RELATIVES IN US. THIS WOULD GIVE A FAIRER, MORE COMPREHENSIBLE, AND MORE ROUNDED PICTURE OF THE ACTUAL FAMILY REUNIFICATION SITUATION.

7. FOR BULGARIA, WE PRESENT FOLLOWING TABLE WHICH PROVIDES ABOVE DATA AS OF MAY 31, 1977:

CASES	INDIVIDUALS
TOTAL ACTIVE EMIGRATION	
CASES KNOWN TO EMBASSY	48 74
NUMBER OF EMIGRATION CASES IN WHICH PASSPORTS PRESENTED TO EMBASSY	
33	44
TOTAL B-2 VISAS ISSUED FOR FAMILY VISITS, 1976	
145	
TOTAL B-2 VISAS ISSUED FOR FAMILY VISITS 1977 TO MAY 31	
95	

8. IN USING THE ABOVE STATISTICS, IT SHOULD BE EXPLAINED THAT 33 RESOLVED CASES OUT OF A TOTAL OF 48 ACTIVE CASES KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY DOES NOT MEAN THE BULGARIANS HAVE REFUSED 15. AS OF MAY 31, ONLY TWO CASES (INKIOW AND MAREV) HAD BEEN REFUSED, AND THE OTHER 13 WERE IN VARIOUS STAGES OF DISCUSSION OR PROCESSING. BUT FOR UNDERSTANDING GOB PERFORMANCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROVISIONS OF THE FINAL ACT ON THE EVE OF THE BELGRADE PREPARATORY CONFERENCE, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IT IS IMPORTANT TO KNOW THAT THE BULGARIANS HAVE ISSUED PASSPORTS AND EXIT PERMISSION IN 273 "CASES" (33 PLUS 145 PLUS 95) -- EVEN THOUGH THAT IS A NUMBER GREATER THAN THEY THEMSELVES CLAIM. WHETHER IT WOULD BE TACTICALLY WISE TO CREDIT THE BULGARIANS AT BELGRADE WITH AN EVEN BETTER PERFORMANCE THAN THEY THEMSELVES ARE CLAIMING IS A MATTER FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION. THE TROUBLE WITH PRESENT US BOOKKEEPING PRACTICE IN FAMILY REUNIFICATION CASES IS THAT IT FOCUSES SOLELY ON CASES IN CONTENTION, WHICH ARE ONLY A PART OF THE WHOLE PICTURE.

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